

Our local radio station, WRLS in Hayward, WI prompted us to comment the following to their Gen. Mgr., Mr. Dick Kaner:

Dear Mr. Kaner, We find your station's recent decision to blacklist the Dixie Chicks, solely for exercising their Constitutional rights to free speech, to be both shocking and appalling! Did you consider your advertisers and listeners when you decided to pursue this boycott? Any American has the right to free speech. Blacklisting someone for exercising that right is not within your censorship rights. Converting someone's expressed personal belief into a boycott, if their beliefs are expressed publicly, is NOT patriotic, it is just the opposite. Is your aim to put fear into the public, so they believe they should keep their thoughts to themselves? What country are we living in? This is still America! Patriotism should never be based solely on presidential policy. After all, it was such blind patriotism that gave rise to Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. If you don't think it can happen here, remember that it starts with someone messing with your Constitutional rights! Perhaps you don't mind Washington or the Bush administration deciding what songs you listen to on the radio, but I do! What is next - are we going to start dragging entertainers before Congress accusing them of being "terrorist sympathizers"? I thought we learned a lesson from the McCarthy debacle; I thought we were better than that. The thought of someone tampering with our Constitutional rights frightens me far more than anything Saddam Hussein could ever do. If that is the direction this country is headed, are we really any better off than the Iraqi people that we may "liberate"? We have to support our troops, wherever they are sent - "don't kill the messenger". It is entirely possible to support our troops, and not support the unilateral strike policy that Mr. Bush is exercising, don't you agree? If you do, then you should continue to play music, voice opinion, and stop admonishing anyone that is free to speak, for it is your right and mine. We considered boycotting your station, but that would put us in your "boycotting club", and we do not want to join. A response from you would be appreciated.

Thank you,

Tony & Laurie Martin  
in Winter, Wisconsin